

620

Human Comedy

A new play
Based on the novel
By William Saroyan

Adapted by
Philip W. Atkinson

Directed by
Richard Klautsch



to november 14th
1992
November 21st
stage II morrison center
8 o'clock p.m.

TELEGRAM
 "WAR DEPARTMENT-
 we regret to inform
 you that your son
 has been killed
 in action. stop

BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS
PRESENTS

WILLIAM SAROYAN'S
THE
HUMAN COMEDY

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY
PHILIP W. ATLAKSON

CAST

in order of appearance

MRS. MACAULEY.....	KELLY WESTON
ULYSSES.....	SCOTT FULLER JAMIE YOUNG
HOMER.....	SAM READ
AUGGIE.....	DAVID CARDOZA
LIONEL.....	MASON FULLER PAUL MERRILL
BLACK MAN.....	JAMES FISK
ACKLEY.....	RICHARD W. BEAN
HELEN.....	TONI MICHELLE RAYBORN
BESS.....	KAREN WENNSTROM
SPANGLER.....	ANTHONY CASPER
GROGAN.....	R.K. WILLIAMS
YOUNG MAN/TOWNSPERSON.....	JIM OLIVIERO
TOBEY.....	RANDY DAVISON
MARCUS.....	ROBERT LACROIX
MRS. SANDOVAL/TOWNSPERSON.....	BECKY GRAHAM
COACH BYFIELD/TOWNSPERSON.....	JEFF LAWRENCE
HENRY/JOE/TOWNSPERSON.....	FLINT WEISSER
SAM/TOWNSPERSON.....	BRENT JONES
GEORGETTE/TOWNSPERSON.....	SANDELEE RUMMLER
MISS HICKS.....	SUE GALLIGAN
MR. EK.....	AUGUST POLLIO
MR. MECHANO/MESSENGER OF DEATH.....	CHRIS MAZE
DRUNK.....	JOE JACOBY
TEX.....	NICK ISON
FAT.....	DANO MADDEN
DIANA.....	SHERI NOVAK
MRS. BEAUFRERE.....	LEE WOODS
MR. ARA.....	VIRGIL LEE ALLBERY
MRS. GALLAGHER.....	PAT PATERSON
CHILDREN OF THE TOWN.....	JAMIE YOUNG, MASON FULLER, PAUL MERILL

ARTISTIC STAFF

DIRECTOR.....	RICHARD KLAUTSCH
SET DESIGNER/TECHNICAL DIRECTOR.....	MICHAEL BALTZELL
COSTUME DESIGNER.....	ANN HOSTE
LIGHTING DESIGNER.....	ALFRED HANSEN
SOUND DESIGNER.....	JOE JACOBY
VOICE COACH.....	ANN KLAUTSCH
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR.....	ASHLEY MARTELL
ORIGINAL MUSIC (WRITTEN AND RECORDED).....	RICHARD OLIVER

PRODUCTION STAFF

STAGE MANAGER.....	JENNIFER BENTON
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER.....	KATIE ANN SKOGSBERG
PROPERTY MASTER.....	JAMES FISK
LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR.....	ASHLEY MARTELL
SOUND BOARD OPERATOR.....	FELICIA GRAYBEAL
WARDROBE.....	SIRI ALDEN
DRESSERS.....	DAN BATES, KRIS MARTIN
PROPS CREW.....	NICOLE FOX, STEPHANIE FELDTMAN
COSTUME ASSISTANT.....	DEBRA CALDWELL
HAIR.....	BOBBI FRANK, DAN BATES ANN HOSTE
PUBLICITY.....	CHARLES LAUTERBACH TED CHALLENGER
HOUSE MANAGER.....	BARBARAJEAN GOFFE-RAPLEE
GRAPHICS DESIGNER.....	ZIDDI MSANGI
GRAPHICS COORDINATOR.....	TERI MICCO

FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT ON THE ADAPTATION PROCESS

I first read "The Human Comedy" four or five years ago. I cried when I read it. I thought about adapting it into a stage play; I had images of children bombing around the stage on clunky, old bicycles. But that was as far as I got. Two years ago during the intermission of "The Grapes of Wrath" at The Cort Theatre in New York, I turned to my wife and blurted out with some force, "I can do "The Human Comedy"". We weren't talking about it, it hadn't even been on my mind, but something in the Steppenwolf Production of that other great American work inspired a determination to do it. A lot of the second act of the play was lost to me that night; I was so distracted. I read the book several more times. I cried every time I read it. Then, last Fall I proposed a production of "The Human Comedy" for the '92-'93 BSU Theatre Arts main season. There was no script, no treatment, no outline, only a few scattered notes and the determination to do it; that was enough. With it on the calendar it was time to get serious about the task of adaptaion. The following semester I offered a course that would get students to mine what dramatic potential they could find in what suddenly showed itself to be a novel quick to resolve it's own conflicts. The semester ended with a reading of a draft written exclusively by the students. When it was over most of them were probably disappointed; the biggest success of the class had been to reveal the dramatic weakness of the novel. But that is not to say that we wasted our time; my goal was not a finished dramatic work anyway. I'm very thankful to them for their assistance. When I finally got around to drafting the play this past August, I turned out a script in about a week (part of which was spent at a conference in Atlanta). When I got back in town the wheels of production were already turning. Naturally, the director and designers were anxious about seeing a script. So, I sat down to my computer and typed and cried. Now...people always want to know what a play is about. To that I have no more comment than the play itself. But one thing I do know, this play is not about crying.

Special thanks to Robert Setrakian of the William Saroyan Foundation, San Francisco and Arthur Horan of the Palmer and Dodge Agency, Boston for permission to adapt "The Human Comedy" into a stage script. This adaptation is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Delberta Brown.

The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival

Presented and Produced by
The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Supported in Part by
The Kennedy Center Corporate Fund
The U.S. Department of Education
Ryder System

This production is an Associate entry in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KC/ACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for adjudication by a regional KC/ACTF representative, and certain students are selected to participate in KC/ACTF programs involving awards, scholarships, and special grants for actors, playwrights,

designers, and critics at both the regional and national levels. Last year more than 800 productions and 17,000 students participated in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival nationwide. By entering this production, our department is sharing in the KC/ACTF goals to help college theater grow and to focus attention on the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

SPECIAL THANKS

Timothy Breiding

Robert Bunch

Idaho Shakespeare Festival

Lens Crafters

Idaho Heritage Inn for the great bicycles.

IJA Productions

Idaho Commission on the Arts

Richard Oliver and Big Sky Productions

Michelle Fisk



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FOR INFORMATION ON PURCHASING AD SPACE IN FUTURE BSU THEATRE ARTS PRODUCTION PROGRAMS:
CALL 385-3981 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE.

THERE WILL BE A 10 MINUTE INTERMISSION AT THE END OF ACT I.

FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT ON THE ADAPTATION PROCESS (ORIGINAL NOTE)

When I first read "The Human Comedy" four or five years ago, I cried when I read it. I thought about trying to adapt it into a stage play. I had an image of children bombing around the stage on clunky, old bicycles. But that was about as far as I got. Two years ago my wife and I were standing in the lobby of The Cort Theatre in New York during the intermission of "The Grapes of Wrath" when I suddenly blurted out with some force, "I can do 'The Human Comedy'." It had nothing to do with what we were talking about. It wasn't even on my mind before I said it. But there was something in the Steppenwolf Production of that other great American work that inspired a determination to do it. A lot of the second act of the play was lost on me that night I was so distracted.

I read the book several more times. I cried every time I read it.

Then last Fall I proposed a production of "The Human Comedy" for the '92-'93 BSU-Theatre Arts main season. There was no script, no treatment, no outline, only a few scattered notes and the determination to do it. But it was enough.

With it on the calendar it was time to go ahead and get serious about the task of adaptation. So in the following semester I offered a course that would get students to do the hard work for me. Their job was to mine what dramatic potential they could find in what suddenly showed itself to be a novel quick to resolve its own conflicts. I guess that should have bothered me (conflict is pretty important to a play), but it didn't. The semester ended with a reading of a collaborated draft written exclusively by the students of the course. When it was all over most of them were probably disappointed. After all the biggest success of the class had been to reveal the dramatic weakness of the novel.

As it turned out I never even consulted the student draft in this adaptation. But that is not to say that we wasted our time last semester. My goal was not a finished dramatic work anyway. The really hard work for me is always to be simple and clear about what I'm doing. So I'm very thankful to them for their assistance.

When I finally got around to drafting the play this past August I turned out a script in about a week. And part of that week was spent at a conference in Atlanta. When I got back in town the wheels of production were already turning. Naturally, the director and designers were anxious about finally seeing a script. So I sat down to my computer and typed and cried.

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